

RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Appln. No. 09/161,981

Applicant notes that Hasegawa was filed on June 15, 1998. On the other hand, the present application claims foreign priority from September 29, 1997 based on Japanese Patent Application No. 264225/1997. Thus, since the priority document was filed in Japan before the U.S. filing date of Hasegawa, Applicant submits concurrently herewith a verified English translation of the Japanese priority document pursuant to Rule 55(a)(4) in order to antedate Hasegawa and remove it as a prior art reference against the present application.

The submission of the verified English translation of the priority document is believed to place claims 1-4 and 9-17 in condition for allowance, and therefore, there is no need to address the prior art rejection on the merits, since Hasegawa is not prior art with respect to the present application.

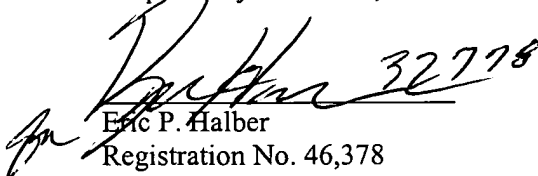
In light of the remarks presented above, Applicant respectfully submits that the applications and the condition for allowance, and such actions hereby solicited. Applicant hereby petitions for any extension of time which may be required to maintain the pendency of this case, and any required fee, except for the issue fee, for such extension has to be charged to the Deposit Account No. 19-4880.

If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,


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